

Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1983

Black box found after Turkish crash kills 55

ANKARA (Agencies) — The flight recorder of a Turkish Airlines (THY) Boeing 737 which crashed in eastern Turkey killing 55 people and injuring 21 others was found in the wreckage on Friday, an airline spokesman said.

The death toll rose when one person died in hospital on Friday, the day after the passenger plane ploughed into a hill near the city of Van's airport in a sudden blizzard, the spokesman said.

A Transport Ministry official told Reuters the pilot of the 737-400, on a domestic flight between Ankara and Van, could not see the approach to Van airport because of driving snow.

Analysis of the flight recorder, or black box, had been delayed but would probably confirm bad weather as the cause of the crash, the ministry said.

Civil aviation investigators from Ankara could not fly to Van on Friday morning because the airport was still closed by bad weather, the official said.

The Boeing, carrying 69 passengers and seven crew, crashed on its third attempt at landing. The pilot and four crew members died in the crash, the official said.

Television pictures showed the aircraft ripped apart and lines of bodies half-buried in deep snow.

A Van airport flight controller offered to send the plane back to Ankara or reroute the plane to Diyarbakir in the southeast but Ugun insisted on making a third landing bid, according to the recordings. Visibility had shrunk to about 100 metres when the plane crashed.

The plane broke into three on impact. Only five people survived unharmed.

Airline officials contacted by AFP would not say if the crash was due to pilot error.

Van regional governor's



Turkish rescue workers make their way through falling snow as they search for survivors of the plane crash late Thursday. A Turkish airlines Boeing 737-400 carrying 76 people crashed on a domestic flight into a mountain in

eastern Turkey with more than 55 people believed to have been killed when the plane came down in a snowstorm (AFP photo).

Israeli said to use U.S. technology in China plane

LOS ANGELES (R) — Israel is helping China build an advanced combat aircraft for the Chinese air force with American technology, the Los Angeles Times has reported.

The newspaper said U.S. technology developed for a joint American-Israeli fighter that was eventually scrapped was being used for the project.

Asked about the Times report, State Department spokesman Mike McCurry said only: "Under the Arms Export Control Act countries which receive U.S. weapons technology must agree not to transfer it to other countries without specific U.S. authorization. We have procedures in place to monitor transfers of U.S. technology. When we receive reliable reports of such transfers we take action in accordance with the law."

Defense Department officials could not immediately

be reached for comment. Confirmation of Israel's role could create tension between Washington and the Jewish state, the Times said. The joint work on the plane is the latest in a series of military projects in which Israel has helped China over the last 15 years.

The paper quoted Marvin Klemm, vice president for government affairs of Israeli Aircraft Industries International, the Washington subsidiary of Israel's state-owned export firm, as denying his company was transferring U.S. technology to China.

The newspaper said Israel and China had already finished work on a prototype of the jet and production would probably start soon at a plant in the Sichuan province capital of Chengdu.

U.S. experts, the paper said, were concerned over the negative implications the new fighter could have for Taiwan, a staunch U.S. ally and sometime foe of China.

"This plane would fit in with a scenario for (conflict over) Taiwan 10 years from now. And for someone to help the Chinese build a production line, a turnkey facility, for this aircraft is ominous," the Times quoted one U.S. government expert as saying.

Another official said "the plane is in the prototype stage. It is a very capable aircraft. It uses extensive U.S. technology."

The official said the aircraft would be ready for flight testing in a year and would be in full service in about a decade.

Eritrea accuses Sudan of persecuting its nationals

ADDIS ABABA (AFP) — Eritrea on Friday accused the Sudanese government, with which it has broken off diplomatic ties, of harassing Eritrean nationals and disrupting a repatriation programme.

Eritreans in Sudan are victims of "searches, arbitrary arrests without due legal process and the confiscation of possessions such as cars," a top foreign ministry official reached by telephone told AFP.

"When Algeria runs out of money and calls on the international community to help it, they will be asked 'Well what have you done?' The war in Algeria is like the one in Lebanon," he said.

France is by far the biggest single investor in Algeria. U.S. global investment amounted to about \$1 billion last year, with Japan contributing \$900 million.

Unlike the other main two, France invests in a wide range of sectors in Algeria. Washington and Tokyo prefer to back its dominant economic areas — notably oil and gas.

Other countries, including Italy, Spain, Portugal and Turkey also invest across the board, but on a much smaller scale than France. Germany, Benelux and Britain are less keen to invest in the conflict-ridden country.

Egyptian court bans popular 'Al Muhajir'

CAIRO (AP) — An Egyptian court on Thursday barred further showing of a film by international acclaimed director Youssef Chahine, saying it violated the Islamic ban against depicting religious prophets.

Judge Ibrahim Gebr based his ruling on a finding last month by Al-Azhar University, a leading centre of Islamic scholarship, that the film's depiction of the Prophet Joseph was a violation of Islamic law.

The newspaper said Chahine had already several times accused Sudan of training hundreds of "terrorists" of fight it, a claim strongly denied by the regime in Khartoum.

President Issaias Afewerki in January said that Islamic guerrillas of several nationalities had entered the country from Sudan and spoke of a "war declared against Eritrea."

Mr. Guirme said Friday that the Ethiopian government has agreed to represent Eritrea's interests in Sudan and was awaiting a response to the proposal from Khartoum.

The latest Eritrean charges against Khartoum came as Yemenn's President Ali Abdullah Saleh was seeking to mediate a settlement to the differences between the neighbouring countries.

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Regent condoles Shreideh family

DEIR ABI SAED (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Thursday visited the Shreideh family at Deir Abi Saeed near Irbid and conveyed to them condolences from His Majesty King Hussein over the death of Captain Bilal Abdul Majid Shreideh who died in a plane crash at Marka Airport Wednesday.

His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein attended the funeral of Capt. Shreideh who was

a Royal Falcon pilot.

The 29-year-old pilot was on take-off from Marka Airport at about 1:00 p.m. Wednesday when his single-seat Extra 300 dove to the ground. Capt. Shreideh, who leaves a wife and infant daughter, was laid to rest in his hometown of Deir Abi Saeed.

His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad delegated the director of the Irbid Police Department to convey his condolences to the Shreideh family.



Malaysian students of Al al Bayt University Thursday recite Islamic songs during a ceremony marking Al Isra Wal Miraj (Petra photo)

Malaysian students take part in marking Islamic holiday

AMMAN (J.T.) — As part of Jordan's observance of Al Isra Wal Miraj, Malaysian students of Al al Bayt University recited Islamic songs in a ceremony held at the university Thursday.

At the ceremony, which was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, university President Mohammad Adnan Al Bakheit said the Isra (Prophet Mohammad's nocturnal journey from Al Masjid Al Haram in Medina Munawarah in Saudi Arabia to Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem), represents the first spiritual conquest of Jerusalem and the first eternal relationship between Al al Bayt (the Hashemites) and Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.

Also addressing the ceremony were President of the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (Al al Bayt Foundation) Nasiruddin Al Assad, Chief Islamic Justice Sheik Nooh Salman and Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who all highlighted the importance of this occasion and stressed the eternal relation between Jerusalem and Al al Bayt.

Following the ceremony, Prince Hassan and the audience attended noon prayers at Bait Ben Rahab Mosque at the university.

The ceremony was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, speakers of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, advisors to His Majesty King Hussein and Crown Prince Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Cabinet ministers and senior civil and military officials.

In Amman, His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein deputised for the King, who is in Austria receiving treatment for an ear infection, and attended a major ceremony held at King Abdullah Mosque in Abdali.

Addressing the ceremony, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi reviewed the great meanings and implications of this occasion, particularly at this time, when our nation is facing many challenges, he said.

Also addressing the congregation was member of the Upper House of Parliament Kamel Al Sharif, who said that Al Isra Wal Miraj is one of the great occasions. It is a great spiritual experience which has significant meaning and implications, he said.

The occasion stresses the status of Jerusalem and its importance to the Muslim Ummah. He praised the role played by the Hashemites in safeguarding the holy places in Jerusalem.

Nothing was definite for Jordan when it entered 1994. It watched with apprehension.

Spurred by this awareness,

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

FILMS

★ Triple features untitled "The Legend of Sleep Hollow," "Winnie the Pooh and the Blustery Day," and "The Wind in the Willows" at the American Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

BAZAR CHRISTMAS DISPLAY

★ "Ramadan Charity Bazaar" at Al Ahdia School for Girls, Jabal Amman, First Circle (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.)

★ Bani Hamida Christmas Display with a variety of small gift items at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, First Circle, Rainbow Street.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of oil paintings by Mahmoud Masa at the Phoenix Gallery for Culture and Art.

★ Plastic art exhibition by Laila Kawash at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of works by Mahmud Obaidi at Darat Al Funun. Also showing an exhibition of portraits by Fahrileissa Zeid and the exhibition of contemporary Arab artists.

★ Exhibition of paintings by Ismail and Tammam Shamoun at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation.

★ Exhibition by artists Latif Al Khateeb and Muhy Khelefa at the Housing Bank Gallery.

★ Exhibition at Mona Saudi's Studio, Abdoun Village — Tel: 829700 until Dec. 31, 1994.

French pilot

(Continued from page 12) although Interior Minister Charles Pasqua said on Tuesday he was "pretty sure" the gunman's leader was named Abdullah Yahia.

Algeria has been in turmoil since the government called off a 1992 general election that the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win. About 20,000

people have been killed in the ensuing three years of civil strife.

An Algerian group warned Friday that it now had a "legal duty" to wage war on France in the wake of the bloody end to last week's Airbus hijack.

The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS) said in a newsletter published Friday that "war against France has become a legal duty" under Islamic Sharia law.

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Flute master Wissam Boustany is back in Jordan for an evening recital, this time with pianist Amira Fouad.

Under the patronage of H.R.H. Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, Al Hussein Society for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped, in cooperation with the British Council in Amman, and with special sponsorship by the Amman Marriott Hotel, has invited Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad to perform on Wednesday, Jan. 4 at the

Royal Cultural Centre (RCC).

Mr. Boustany's resume indicates that he performed in 1991 under the baton of the great Claudio Abbado.

However, after a complete reading of the resume and the unanimous, superlative press

critiques of the Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Times and others, one is tempted to re-arrange the sentence to read: "Claudio Abbado had the pleasure and the honour to conduct Wissam Boustany."

Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad will play works by Donizetti, Doppler, Chopin,

Frank as well as Boustany's own compositions. Both performers are of Arab origin — Mr. Boustany is from Lebanon and a British citizen now, and Ms. Fouad was born in Scotland to Egyptian parents.

They have both lived and studied in Great Britain.

Wissam Boustany does not consider it sufficient to play with unsurpassed virtuosity, taste and musicianship, thus joining great flutists such as Jean-Pierre Rampal of France and others, he is also concerned with bringing to his audiences contemporary works through attractive

programmes.

Amira Fouad studied in Canada, England and France. She was the winner of the "Young Artist Competition," and has played and recorded in solo recitals in Canada. Ms. Fouad, has also performed with the Cairo Symphony Orchestra.

The Canadian "Kingston Whig Standard" of Ontario, wrote about her: "...The freshness of youth plus a brilliant technique..."

The new year could not start with musicians of higher standards than Mr. Boustany and Ms. Fouad.



An employee registers transactions at the Amman Financial Market

process and economic negotiations with the Palestines influenced and curbed growth of the market throughout the year. A further to investor scepticism was that capital gains were subject to taxation changed legislation with less-than-anticipatory flow of foreign capital.

Reducing customs duties on vehicles. Further reductions are expected next year.

Moving to restructure financially troubled Royal Jordanian, the national carrier, by increasing its capital.

Announcing moves to privatise the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC). A concession to install and operate Jordan's first cellular phone system was given to a local company in affiliation with an American giant.

Undertaking moves to salvage some of the troubled state-owned enterprises.

Launching moves to correct the imbalances and inefficiencies in the energy and water sectors.

Preparing a draft budget for 1995 worth JD 1.674 billion with JD 50 million deficit. The budget was approved unchanged by Parliament in return for a government undertaking to implement most of a list of 67 recommended reforms.

The reforms, if implemented, according to their proponents, would go a long way in correcting many "shortcomings" in the economy and their repercussions on the low-income group.

In fact, according to Governor Mohammad Nahulsi, the dinar can a higher exchange against most currencies, but any valuation would reflect on the Kingdom's e

Trucks to be allowed back on old road to Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — In

response to truck drivers' protests about unsafe conditions of the ring road around the port city of Aqaba, Minister of Transport Samir Kawar announced that trucks can will now be allowed to use the old road to Aqaba at night.

The announcement was made following an inspection tour of the Aqaba region and the ring road by Mr. Kawar and the interior and public works minister.

Trucks drivers commuting between Aqaba and Amman last week staged a strike saying that "the death road" was responsible for the death of 21 of their col-



Wissam Boustany



Amira Fouad

Boustany, Fouad to ring in the New Year with a flute and piano recital

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

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The Canadian "Kingston

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wrote about her: "...The

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brilliant technique..."

The new year could not

start with musicians of higher

standards than Mr. Boustany

and Ms. Fouad.

OBITUARY

The Chechen and the North Caucasus community in Jordan mourn the death of American photographer/journalist, CYNTHIA ELBAUM, a sister who shared the death and its plight in Chechenya. Our deepest condolences to her family and the American people.

Tel/Fax 6-8315

Korea frees U.S. pilot

MUNJOM, Korea (R) — South Korea Friday freed S. helicopter pilot it had held for 13 days, allowing him to fly home to Florida for Year's Day and keeping its nuclear deal with the United States.

Officer Hall looked pale and was wearing the flying suit he wore in his helicopter when it was shot down in North Korea on 17 as he crossed the heavily fortified Korean border to South Korea in the United States in the 1970s.

Officer Hall, 20, flew to the United States for a medical check-up, briefing, and then left the United States in the 1970s.

President Bill Clinton extended his relief at Officer Hall's release. He said he had been with Officer Hall by one, and that Officer Hall said he was well.

Brooksville, Florida, Officer Hall's family wept when they learned he was

is a moment of great less for the American," said U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Hubbard, who was seen with Officer Hall's family in Pyongy়ang, and with him. Hubbard said the nuclear deal was now on track. DPRK has up to now

faithfully implemented its part of the agreed framework and we believe that it is in our interest that we do the same and we are therefore pleased that we can now look to the future and implement the important project," he said.

Under the accord reached in October, designed to eliminate North Korea's ability to produce nuclear arms, Washington is to arrange the supply to Pyongy়ang of new nuclear reactors costing \$4 billion and interim supplies of fuel oil.

The two countries also agreed to take steps towards establishing normal diplomatic relations.

Mr. Hubbard said he had "two rather difficult days" in Pyongy়ang working for Officer Hall's release, but he had no deals.

Pyongy়ang says it brought down the U.S. helicopter with one shot and Officer Hall's co-pilot David Hileman, whose body was handed over last week, was killed in the crash.

It accused the Americans of espionage and issued what it described as Officer Hall's confession to "illegal intrusion." Washington says the helicopter strayed across the border accidentally.

Mr. Clinton also said the United States had given up nothing in the agreement that secured Officer Hall's release.

"Chief Warrant Officer Hall was held for too long after his helicopter strayed off course on a routine training mission. But we are very glad that he has been released and is now in freedom," he said.

In Seoul, Mr. Hubbard expressly denied there had been or would be bilateral military contacts with the North, and said the prisoner of war issue was for the two Koreas to discuss.

The U.S. military says contacts between North Korean and U.S. army officers over Officer Hall were carried out on the U.S. side under the auspices of the U.N. Command in Korea, which supervises the Korean War armistice.

White House officials said Mr. Clinton spoke to South Korean President Kim Young-Sam and stressed that the nuclear agreement was not altered by the arrangement freeing Officer Hall.

Seoul welcomed the release but urged Pyongy়ang to resume dialogue with the South to ease tensions. The two Koreas are still technically at war since their 1950-53 conflict, as no peace treaty has ever been signed by them.

The helicopter incident had prompted an angry response from many U.S. congressmen, who said unless Officer Hall was freed quickly it would threaten the nuclear agreement.

"The United States also agreed to our demand to give

necessary cooperation so that unconverted prisoners of war (North Korean soldiers held by South Korea) can be returned home quickly," he said.

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Parliament Speaker Sheikh Razak Ali (left) holds resignation letters of the main opposition Awami League. On the right is league chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed. The opposition said 147 MPs resigned, instead of 152 as some would follow suit in the next several days. The resignation came after last-ditch efforts failed to end a nine-month stand-off (AFP photo)

Bangladesh political crisis lingers on after Zia olive branch rejected

DHAKA (AFP) — A political crisis that has wracked Bangladeshi politics since March appeared far from resolution Friday, as opposition MPs rejected an olive branch held out by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia.

"We have already asked for the government's immediate resignation and the holding of fresh elections," an opposition official told AFP, rejecting Mrs. Zia's offer to step down in 1996, 30 days before the country's next scheduled polls.

Mohammad Nasim of the Awami League told AFP that opposition MPs would also not reconsider their mass resignation from parliament Wednesday, despite a plan from Mrs. Zia to reassess their seats "for the sake of the country."

Mr. Nasim said there had been no contact between the opposition and government overnight and that all previous offers from the ruling party were "dead."

Government and ruling party officials were unavailable for comment Friday.

The three main opposition groups Wednesday handed in resignation papers from 147 MPs accusing the government of failing to accept a nine-month-old demand that Mrs. Zia step down and agree to new elections under a neutral administration.

Mrs. Zia's offer to step down prior to the 1996 elections and her surprise appeal to the opposition came against the backdrop of an opposition-called general strike in the capital Thursday, and a legal controversy over the negotiations.

Parliament Speaker Sheikh Razak Ali said he received the resignation letters from the MPs in three bundles, adding that he would have to look at each document individually since they were not presented to him in person.

Bangladesh's constitution requires MPs personally to hand in notices of resignation to the speaker.

Sources in parliament said Mr. Ali, who is already out of the capital, had sought legal advice on the controversy and would return here Saturday to give his ruling.

The sources also said some opposition MPs had contacted Mr. Ali after the mass resignation expressing a desire to keep their seats.

Of the 147 MPs, only the resignation of Salauddin Qader Chowdhury, from the National Democratic Party, was accepted as he personally gave notice to Mr. Ali.

Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina Wajed said Thursday that the MPs would

Bardot quits Saint-Tropez

TOULON, France (AFP) — French actress and animal rights campaigner Brigitte Bardot said Thursday she is quitting Saint-Tropez, the French Riviera fishing village her presence transformed into a playground of the rich and famous. Bardot told a news conference that her Paris-based animal rights foundation now took up so much time that it was a handicap for her to be so far away. Besides, "Saint-Tropez is no longer Saint-Tropez for me," she said, adding: "Everything has changed too much." A victim of its own success, Saint-Tropez is now a magnet for backpackers and the budget end of the holiday market. Bardot walked out on Saint-Tropez last June amid a highly-publicized row with Mayor Jean-Michel Couve, owing not to return until he left office, in protest at the council's decision to let one of its halls to a hunters' convention. Reports said Mr. Couve had finally managed to mollify her by seeking her advice on what to do about the pigeons that were becoming a pest in the town. She spent Christmas with her husband Bernard d'Ornal and friends at her villa at La Madrague on the outskirts of Saint-Tropez, and compered an "Animals' Christmas" at nearby Hyeres Thursday. She made a plea for homes for neglected animals and campaigned for low-cost sterilization of animals to stop the procreation of unwanted pets.

Row erupts after no winners in Manila filmfest

MANILA (R) — Judges at an annual Philippine Film Festival have refused to hand out award for best picture and director, saying none of the entries were good enough. Mario Hernando, a film critic and one of the judges, told a television station Wednesday that all six films failed to make a mark.

"We wanted to send a message to the producers that the quality of the movies should be improved. They should not make films just for the sake of participating. This has been the weakest filmfest in terms of quality," he said.

Only the awards for best actor and actress were handed out to virtual unknowns. Philippine films, frequently made on the cheap, are typically comedy or action tales that glorify violence. The decision of the jurors Tuesday evening, which left movie producers and directors speechless, came a few months after a scandal rocked the intrigue-ridden Philippine industry. Actress Rufa Gutierrez, powerful movie manager Lolit Solis and two other actors are on trial accused of plotting to rig awards for best actor and actress in another film festival in June. Gutierrez, Solis and another actor deny fraud charges over the alleged switch of envelopes containing the names of the winners. Officials of an auditing company which counted the ballots of the judge on Tuesday night stood behind the presenters to make sure the right name was announced.

Royal Navy offers sailors wine

LONDON (R) — Sailors in Britain's Royal Navy can now switch their daily drink ration from beer to wine. One of the reasons cited for the decision is the presence of 40,000 WRENS in the Navy. The move, announced in the navy newspaper, won immediate plaudits. One woman serving on the aircraft carrier Ark Royal said: "Most of the girls prefer wine. It's more feminine." In 1970, the navy dropped a 300-year-old tradition of giving sailors a daily tot of rum.

Mother of 12 denied French big family medal

PARIS (R) — A French woman with 12 children accused the government of hard-heartedness for refusing her a gold medal awarded to mothers of big families. Solange Clarenne, 73, had five of her children before she married their father — disqualifying her from getting the medal automatically awarded to women with eight or more children born in wedlock. "I was a good mother... my children have no reason to reproach me. I've done what I can for them," she told France's TF1 television in an interview in her home in the eastern Moselle region.

Clinton expects to seek reelection

INGTON (R) — U.S. President Bill Clinton, vowing his agenda over his low popularity said Thursday he intends to seek reelection to seek nothing that make him change his

interview with news reporters, Mr. Clinton: "I'm just going to the very best job I do my very best to tend to seek reelection that is not uppermost in my mind. At bad been uppermost in my mind, I never

Mandela hails an 'epoch-making' 1994

and had made "significant progress."

"A national consensus has been forged on the policy to bring a better life to all South Africans," he said, adding that all seven parties that made up the government of national unity were united behind the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to wipe out the injustices of apartheid.

The ANC won 62.6 percent of the vote and dominates the National Assembly, followed by the former ruling National Party, the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party and four other smaller parties.

Listing his government's achievements, Mr. Mandela said initial plans to implement

uniting all sectors of society behind Mr. Mandela's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

The programme aims in five years to create 2.5 million jobs, build one million houses and electrify another 2.5 million, provide 10 years of free education to all and redistribute 30 percent of all farmland to blacks.

After seven months, however, there is little concrete evidence that the government will come anywhere near meeting these targets.

"At the moment, (the RDP) is little more than a mantra in the public mind, chanted in expectation of magical delivery," said journalist and political commentator Alistair Sparks in a recent article.

"For the most part, the policy stage has been completed," he added. "Now the policies must be implemented. It is delivery time."

He warned that the programme must be restructured to make some quick and highly visible deliveries if popular expectations are not to reach crisis level.

If deliveries are not forthcoming, he added, "the impatience will grow and may well start developing racist overtones, eventually leading to the kind of racial confrontation that has always been this country's worst-case scenario."

Another commentator, Kaizer Nyatsuma of the Johannesburg Star, warned that a "new mood" had replaced the euphoria that swept black townships after April's historic all-race elections scheduled for next October.

He said: "The new grouping with more than 370 million people will at the start comprise an economic area without internal borders, with freedom of movement for capital, goods and services.

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Violentities threaten S. African 'miracle'

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In an initial phase due to

start soon, there will be freedom of movement for people without identity checks among seven countries, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain.

It took almost 10 years to arrange for Portugal and Spain's entry, but negotiations with the three newcomers took barely one year.

Unlike in 1986, when Portugal and Spain joined, the new enlargement entails much more ambitious aims:

"Politics is sometimes a bumpy ride. As we enter this New Year I wish to congratulate all South Africans on their selfless efforts to make this possible."

"There is a sea change," he said. "The high tide of federalism in Europe has been reached and is declining. There are still enthusiasts who will argue for it, but I do not myself believe that they will carry the day."

"The argument that we should be in Europe, fighting for the sort of Europe we care about, will carry the day because I believe that is the majority view amongst the British people."

Mr. Major also said he was confident that lasting peace in Northern Ireland was at hand, the will of the people to end violence serving as "a very powerful impetus" towards a political settlement.

Asked about a scathing year of political misfortune that left him and his government at the bottom of opinion polls, Mr. Major said: "Politics is sometimes a bumpy ride. If you're prepared to accept the humps, don't go in for it."

"Uplifting living conditions will be a priority," he said. "As we enter this New Year I wish to congratulate all South Africans on their selfless efforts to make this possible."

"These achievements are a tribute to the glorious people we are," he said. "As we enter this New Year I wish to congratulate all South Africans on their selfless efforts to make this possible."

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World News



Rose presses on with Bosnia truce mission



Santa Claus gives New Year gift-parcels to children in a Sarajevo theatre, in a traditional delivery prepared for children of the theatre employees (AFP photo)

SARAJEVO (R) — United Nations chiefs in Bosnia Friday pressed ahead with efforts to persuade the warring factions to agree a four-month ceasefire aimed at paving the way to a political settlement of the 33-month war.

Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, commander of UN forces in Bosnia, held nearly three hours of talks in Sarajevo with Bosnian Vice-President Ejup Ganic and other members of the Muslim-led government.

His immediate superior, General Bertrand De Lapeyre, was planning an appeal to rebel Serbs in Croatia in an attempt to bring them into a ceasefire process they have so far ignored.

Gen. Rose's discussions in the Bosnian capital were intended to hammer out remaining details of the ceasefire deal, under which U.N. troops would police buffer zones between the Bosnian Serb and Bosnian government forces.

United Nations spokesman Alex Ivanko told reporters more talks might be needed to finalise matters.

"Another meeting may be necessary to facilitate the full text of the cessation of hostilities agreement," he said, but added: "UNPROFOR (the U.N. Protection Force) still believes an agreement can be signed tomorrow or Sunday."

The proposed four-month ceasefire was the result of a freelance peace mission to Bosnia earlier this month by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter.

Mr. Carter negotiated a seven-day Christmas ceasefire which stopped most of the fighting in Bosnia except

for the Bihać enclave where Croatian Serb and rebel Muslim forces joined attacks on government troops.

The seven-day truce was intended to allow time for talks on the wider, four-month ceasefire.

Gen. Rose and Bosnian Serb military commander General Ratko Mladić said after a meeting Thursday that they still hoped to meet the scheduled Jan. 1 deadline for signing the ceasefire agreement.

Commenting on Gen. Rose's talks in Pale, Mr. Ivanko said: "Significant progress was made in reconciling the draft cessation of hostilities agreement. An

amalgamated text was agreed upon with the Bosnian Serb authorities."

He said Gen. Rose then met Mr. Ganic and other Bosnian officials in Sarajevo and presented them with the revised text of the cessation of hostilities agreement.

Mr. Ivanko added: "The Bosnian government also provided UNPROFOR with its own draft of such an agreement based on previous UNPROFOR draft." UNPROFOR is now comparing these two drafts and trying to work out a common document.

The Bosnian government has said it wants an end to fighting in the northwestern

Bosnian enclave of Bihać before it will agree the deal.

The United Nations pledged to make efforts to bring the Croatian Serbs,

who are not a party to the truce and who have been attacking the Bihać enclave, into the ceasefire process.

Gen. De Lapeyre, the overall U.N. military commander in former Yugoslavia, would visit rebel Croatian troops in their headquarters.

Mr. Ivanko said: "General De Lapeyre is planning to visit Knin where he will meet local Arab authorities to try to convince them to respect the letter and spirit of the ceasefire agreement to which they are not signatories."

"UNPROFOR would like to stress the ceasefire continues to hold although violations are still being registered."

Major Herve Gourmelon, a U.N. military spokesman, said: "The area was very quiet throughout the day as the ceasefire continues to take effect. The Bihać pocket is still the most active area, especially around Velika Kladuša."

He said there had been 26 confirmed ceasefire violations across Bosnia over the past 24 hours, six determined to be of joint responsibility, for the fault of the Bosnian government army and 16 assessed as the fault of the Bosnian Serb Army.

Presidential poll will hamper France's EU role

PARIS (AFP) — France's six months in the EU chair starting on New Year's Day will be made more problematic by the election, due in April and May, of a successor to former U.S. President François Mitterrand.

As president of the European Council, France will have to handle the arrival of Austria, Finland and Sweden, bringing European Union (EU) membership to 15 states, and work with a new EU Commission headed by newcomer Jacques Santer of Luxembourg, successor to the long-serving Jacques Delors of France.

To offset the vagaries of domestic politics, the government here has for some months already been coordinating work schedules with the outgoing Germans and the Spaniards who will take over the presidency in mid-year.

The watchword of the French stewardship would be continuity, Foreign Minister Alain Juppé said.

Government and diplomatic sources also expect the French to find time for their pet concerns of relations with Mediterranean states, security in Europe, and European cultural identity.

The timetable drawn up by Paris for meetings of the EU council of ministers is blank for six weeks in April and May because of the French presidential poll, with voting in two rounds on April 23 and May 7.

The winner will have precious little time to be briefed on chairing the EU heads of state and government summit in Cannes on the Riviera at the end of June, when there will be an end-of-term report on the French tenure.

European Affairs Minister Alain Lamassoure admitted the overlapping of European duties and French domestic affairs will incontestably pose problems for us."

Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, favourite in the opinion polls to win the presidential race, will be expected to conduct government business as usual, while Mr. Juppé is heavily involved in promoting the presidential prospects of Mr. Balladur's rival Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris.

The decision of the Socialist Delors not to run has considerably lessened risks of direct confrontation between proponents and foes of the "federal" Europe so dear to Mr. Delors when he was in Brussels. But debate on the future structure of Europe remains open.

Aftershocks hit quake-stricken Japanese city

HACHINOHE, Japan (R) — Strong aftershocks from a powerful earthquake rumbled through northern Japan Friday and were predicted to continue as residents rushed to clean up before the New Year holiday.

Shoppers buying in for the holiday filled the streets of central Hachinohe, a fishing port 400 kilometres north of Tokyo, which suffered widespread damage when a major quake struck off Japan's Pacific coast late Wednesday night.

"We're working all out to

restore calm for our citizens, but our opponent is nature," said the visibly tired Nakasato.

Japan's Meteorological Agency reported a total of 256 aftershocks as of early Friday.

"I'm not certain as to the scientific basis of the prediction, but as it was made by experts, I feel worried," Hachinohe Mayor Nobuo Nakasato told reporters after a government Earthquake Protection Agency forecast further tremors.

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restore calm for our citizens, but our opponent is nature," said the visibly tired Nakasato.

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"Wednesday's quake, which measured 7.5 on the open-ended Richter scale, killed two people and badly damaged houses, roads and railway sites around Hachinohe.

Some 30,000 households in the city were still without water Friday. Hachinohe has a population of 420,000.

The mayor asked the national government to help tackle damage which city officials predicted would exceed 17 billion yen (\$170 million).

Police said the final casualty toll from the quake was 285 people, all but three of whom were in Hachinohe and outlying areas of Aomori prefecture. The two people killed in the quake died when a pachinko (pinball) parlour collapsed.

Seismologists said the earthquake was probably triggered by slippage of tectonic plates along the huge trench known as the "Japan Deep".

Rao ousts challenger from campaign committee

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao axed challenger Arjun Singh from the Congress Party's Campaign Committee for February's state polls and signalled an imminent shake-up, party leaders said Friday.

Mr. Singh, a powerful party leader who had been included in all key campaign decisions so far, was kept out of the 26-member committee that will devise campaign strategy in five states voting in February, they said.

Congress, which lost power in three of four states that voted last month, faces serious challenges in the upcoming elections.

"Major changes in the party are due," Congress spokesman Ved Prakash told Reuters. "A reorganisation of the Congress (National) Committee is coming up."

Mr. Rao told the Times Of

India in an interview published Friday that he planned to change the president of the party in the southern state of Tamil Nadu and other states.

It said he was likely to reshuffle his cabinet on New Year's Day.

The recent election defeats were compounded by the resignation last week of Mr. Singh, the human resources development minister, who criticised Mr. Rao's leadership for betraying the interests of the poor and minorities, traditional Congress supporters.

In his resignation letter, Mr. Singh said: "Adhocism and arbitrariness and the will to impose one's own decisions on partymen in various states has totally paralysed the initiatives that partymen take, and reduced the party to a state of inertia."

Several party leaders, while seeking disciplinary action against Mr. Singh for remarks he made on the issues he raised, were irrelevant.

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Food Minister Kalpanath Rai, blamed in an official probe into a sugar import scandal, lost his job. The resignation of Civil Supplies Minister A.K. Antony, who also quit over the sugar scandal, has not yet been accepted.

In his resignation letter, Mr. Singh criticised the current economic reform programme initiated by Mr. Rao in 1991.

A perception has emerged that liberalisation of economic policy perhaps has become liberalisation of corruption," he wrote.

Uttar Pradesh party chief Sharad Pawar, chief minister of Maharashtra state, said after Mr. Singh's resignation.

Spanish row over anti-ETA operations deepens

MADRID (R) — Spain's minority Socialist government faced growing pressure Friday to respond to allegations that it masterminded illicit operations against Basque separatists in the 1980s.

The Justice and Interior Minister, Juan Alberto Belloch, told a special session of the parliamentary committee which monitors his department: "We must respect the judicial process and assume the innocence of those involved."

But Antonio Romero of the United Left Movement called Mr. Belloch's presentation to the committee "empty of content" and Popular Party spokesman Francisco Alvarez Casos said the government had to explain what it knew about the situation.

The arrest last week of Julian Sanchez, a former head of state security who is suspected of links with the shadowy anti-terrorist Liberation Group (GAL), blew up into a political storm that has provoked opposition calls for an early general election

and caused turmoil in nervous financial markets.

Press interviews by two former policemen who were convicted in 1991 of GAL activities sought to implicate two ex-cabinet of involvement. One of the ex-ministers, Jose Barrionuevo, who once held the interior portfolio, has said he will sue for libel.

Opposition parliamentarians said Friday that government reliance over GAL could blight relations with Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez. Mr. Belloch was obliged to appear in parliament only after the socialists' Catalan allies in parliament insisted.

"I can say to you, Mr. Belloch, that if the judges condemn Sanchez, it will be a political condemnation of Gonzalez," Mr. Alvarez Casos said.

But Mr. Belloch, who as a Basque country judge in the 1980s was among those who most fiercely attacked GAL activities, denied the government was obstructing investigations and promised full cooperation within the constraints of the law. "My task is to convince you this ministry will collaborate fully with the judges," he said, recalling the case before the courts.

He did say that in his opinion the published interviews with former Basque Police Chief Jose Amedo and ex-inspector Miguel Dominguez were contradictory. But, he added, this was up to the judges to assess.

Mr. Gonzalez, at a news conference Thursday, denied any government involvement in GAL activities. "Let this be one and for all clear, so as not to have to keep on insisting," he said.

His words offered scant reassurance to financial markets Thursday, though stock and the value of the peseta steadied Friday in what dealers called a technical reaction.

El País, in an editorial Friday, said Mr. Gonzalez had been convincing at the news conference, but added that he could be in danger of losing credibility in the eyes of the general public.

The political situation is so serious that many, and from diverse backgrounds, are urging early elections or the prime minister's resignation," said.

Under these circumstances, it added, it called for Mr. Gonzalez himself to appear in parliament to give a full account.

Opposition leader Jose Maria Aznar said Mr. Gonzalez had lost the capacity to govern and he urged that a general election be called within six months. But he again rejected a call for a motion of censure as it would not prosper.

Catalan leader Jordi Pujol, in a newspaper interview Thursday, said he was not withdrawing the parliamentary support of his Convergencia I Unio's 17 seats, which give the Socialists a one-seat majority in the lower house.

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شركة احمد عيسى مزاد

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Features

Established Soviet-era immigrants balk at newcomers

By Doima Chiacu
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Before communism crumbled, immigrants from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe flocked to the United States for freedom and democracy.

Today they come for something else.

"Now you have people who just want to get rich. It doesn't matter how," said Ena Ghyka of Arlington, Va., who fled Romania in 1976.

"It's a different breed, completely different," said Irene Nikitin, 71, of San Francisco, World War II refugee from Kiev.

The latest wave of immigrants from Russia and its former satellites is getting a chilly reception from some of those who came before.

Communist-era refugees were escaping political or religious persecution, which gave their immigrant status a martyr-like glow, they see the newcomers as everything from rude to morally bankrupt, lured to the United States by videocassette recorders and fast cars. And they hold the Iron Curtain responsible.

"The people on top of the social pyramid were stealing — there was no morality. Everybody was stealing, everybody was cheating. For years it became a habit, built into their nervous system," said Andrew Krawecki, 58, a staff writer for the Polish Daily News in Chicago.

Mr. Krawecki said he had the same "bad habits" to break when he came from Poland 20 years ago, but it may be harder for those who lived that way longer.

"Some newcomers are cheating everyone from IRS to friends," Mr. Krawecki said, referring to the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. tax agency. "They wouldn't obey the rules. ... They are destroyed from the inside. And it's not their fault. It's the system."

Newcomers don't deny a communist society left a mark on its people.

"We were as blind cats in former Soviet Union because we believed in communism and other things," said Lyuba Mityankina, who arrived from Ukraine last year.

"We're different, it's a big difference in mentality, and in values," she said. "For this reason, the Romanians try not to be in contact with other Romanians."

Some Zabelin of San Francisco, who has helped fellow Russian speakers settle in the area, has a more detached view of their situation.

"People take two generations to arrive at some kind of — if I can call it a normal — society," said Mr. Zabelin, 71, who was born in Croatia to Russian parents and left in 1947. "It will take time to get rid of the whole pervasive influence of his party. It will take time to clean all that up — for the Romanians. Bulgarians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks — that's why they are here."

"But they point out that life has gotten harder in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, with antisemitism, crime and ethnic clashes on the rise."

"People who are coming now are much more like refugees, escaping a war zone," said Vladimir Vishnevskiy, 36, who came from Russia 30 years ago. "People who came before were like prisoners escaping prison."

Yes, they long for a better life, he said. And why shouldn't they?

Friction between the old guard and newcomers is nothing new in this country of immigrants, said Arthur Helton, director of migration.

Russians bog down around Grozny

(Continued from page 1) out a responsible and dangerous combat duty," TASS quoted Mr. Yeltsin as saying.

"Everyone will be thinking about you this New Year," he said from the Kremlin in Moscow.

Russians have sent planeloads of presents to troops in Chechnya for New Year, traditionally the biggest holiday in Moscow.

Dozens of Russian soldiers are among the many victims of the fighting so far. There are no reliable figures from either side but reporters in Grozny say Chechen casualties are high, hospitals are full of injured civilians

programmes at the Open Society Institute. Those who settled on the lower east side of Manhattan at the turn of the century. For example, were "reviled and demonized" by other Americans, including those who came before, he said.

But a fierce ideological conflict, now as dead as the cold war and the "evil empire," makes this situation unique in recent immigrant history.

"It's a difference between people who are brought up under a totalitarian, communist, paternalistic system and those who have absolutely no knowledge of that kind of system," said Pauline Bils, head of Action for Russian Immigrants. A resettlement programme in Brighton Beach in the New York city borough of Brooklyn.

"We're talking primarily about a 70- to 75-year gap — or what I call a black hole — of people who have lived under this totalitarian system. This great experiment that became a dismal failure."

So dismal that many people didn't want to stay to pick up the pieces.

Immigration to the United States from the region has increased sharply since the Iron Curtain rose. Immigrants admitted from former Soviet republics alone went from 11,100 in 1989 to 58,500 in 1993, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

In Brighton Beach, a boardwalk community of up to 60,000 Russian immigrants, "Nyet" is more common than "No" on the streets and many stores use the Cyrillic alphabet.

Ms. Bils says tensions between immigrants are normal: "People will always look down on the new kid on the block."

But Russians in Brighton Beach have become so identified with crime, particularly the organised kind, that established immigrants in the New York area formed a group to protect Russian speakers from discrimination.

In Ms. Ghyka's Romanian circle, the newcomers and established emigres are a poet, the sister of a famous jazz trumpeter and an unabashed fan of Nelson Mandela.

Barbara Masekela, 53, also feels strongly about the fact that she is the only woman among the first 16 immigrants named by Mandela this month.

South Africa is full of talented women... they can be found and they must be found. It does not fit the image as a democratic country not to have women in these positions," she said in an interview.

"It's incumbent on the government to find them."

Ms. Masekela, who takes up her post on Jan. 1, points out that she and other prominent figures in Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) came from poor families.

"That reminds us of who we are... my brother and I always wanted to remember that so that we couldn't lose

and short of drugs.

Mr. Yeltsin said the campaign would lead to a safer, more peaceful Russia.

Those who are impatiently awaiting your return and who will raise their glass to you this New Year's Eve are depending on you for a peaceful and calm 1995," he was quoted as saying in an address released by his press service.

"I am sure the people of Chechnya will see the importance of what you are doing, in the name of preserving the homeland, the united and indivisible Russia," Mr. Yeltsin was quoted as saying.

Moreover, homework teaches kids skills they'll need to succeed in the real

By Nanna Mwaluko
Reuter

NAIROBI — The appointment of Africa's first woman vice-president has focused attention on why so few African women enter politics and only a much smaller minority reach high office.

Two recent international meetings — the U.N. Population Conference in Cairo in September and the fifth African Regional Conference on Women in Senegal last month — put women's liberation and empowerment at the forefront of their concerns.

But both took place on the world's poorest continent, where half its population as women are stifled by cultural and sexual taboos. No one expects the conferences to provoke rapid change.

"Women politicians in Africa have to fight prejudices in society and an environment not conducive to success," said Maria Nzonjo, a Nairobi University senior

By Judy Aita

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 15 renewed its call for a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel land mines and supported efforts now underway to strengthen the international protocols which govern their use.

Adopting a non-binding resolution without a vote, the assembly renewed the call made last year for states to declare moratoriums at the earliest possible date. In the past year over 10 states have stopped exporting anti-personnel mines. One of these states, Italy, was one of the world's largest exporters.

In 1992 the United States began a unilateral moratorium on exporting mines. But U.S. production is minuscule. Despite a 1980 international treaty restricting the use of land mines, some 35 countries still manufacture and export them. The leaders, according to the U.N., have been China, Russia and Italy.

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Moreover, homework teaches kids skills they'll need to succeed in the real

workday world, such as evading responsibility, cutting corners and plagiarism.

Yet in California an outspoken school board member has come up with a plan to abolish homework, which begs the question: is he getting paid off in baby-sitting dollars? Banning homework has taken off in the intensity of other historic social ideals such as: taxation without representation, a tyranny, and

African women's hard, dangerous life in politics

By Nanna Mwaluko
Reuter

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"Women politicians in Africa have to fight prejudices in society and an environment not conducive to success," said Maria Nzonjo, a Nairobi University senior

lecturer in political science.

The idea that women are less capable has long been in society. They face also increasingly more hardship as they lack enough funds," she said, noting that traditionally African women are barred from owning property.

Based on poverty — sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest number of people under the international poverty line — women are well aware of the host of hurdles to a political life.

Many say they are forced to toe the party line of their male opposite numbers who wheel and deal in the political arena while women take a socially accepted backseat as merely token leaders.

On being named, Uganda's Ande Wandira Kazibwe said:

"Women politicians in Africa should know that private ges-

accorded to us by govern-

ment will have to go with re-

sponsibilities... I am ready to show my worth."

Ms. Kazibwe retained her

previous position of minister of gender (women's) community development, a rare portfolio in Africa.

Male newspaper commenta-

tors in Uganda's capital

Kampala praised President

Yoweri Museveni's decision

to appoint Ms. Kazibwe,

saying he had sewn up the

women's vote for elections

next year.

"At campaigns, women are

seated at and depicted as

frustrated divorcees in politi-

cials as a last resort. African

women don't like to vote or

study politics," said politics

student Mary Mwangi.

"Men feel you will still be

political spodog and beca-

use we are so few they

throw mud and slander us,"

said Agnes Ndeti, a parlia-

mentarian and the foremost

woman in Kenya's opposi-

tion.

"But none of us have de-

feated (to the ruling Kanu

Party) because we believe in

what we are doing," she

added.

Ms. Kazibwe retained her

position of minister of gender

(women's) community de-

velopment, a rare portfolio in

Africa.

Lip service to equality is

increasingly paid by leaders

in Africa because of in-

creased solidarity among

women demanding a greater

say in the continent, but

are few and far between.

A dynamic, shrewd woman

who preached tribal tol-

erance in a nation where eth-

nic allegiance is seen as all-

important, she led a tough

fight against women being de-

picted as the weak sex who

should be shunted out of pub-

lic service.

At a political rally in the

capital Kigali, Mr. Habyarimana singled out his prime

minister by shouting: "You,

woman."

Ms. Uwilingiyimana stood

and replied: "Don't call me

that. I am not your wife."

Only the second African

woman to serve as a prime

Economy

Dollar set for rollercoaster ride in 1995

LONDON (R) — Investors may be able to breathe a sigh of relief now the dollar is finally clawing its way higher, but the upturn is only likely to last until the summer, financial analysts said Friday.

"They had yet to do the 'I's' and cross the 'T's' on forecasts for next year but in the main saw a Deutsche-mark upturn in the second half of 1995 putting paid to the dollar rally."

"Further Federal Reserve tightening in the first half of next year means the dollar will remain strong but in the second half other countries, Germany in particular, will start to tighten," said James Montier, economist at Kleinwort Benson.

The U.S. currency rode out 1994 on a subdued note, suffering an unexpected blow from political and economic

problems in southerly neighbour Mexico.

The threat of dollars flooding the market if Mexico moved to support a recently devalued peso led to a sudden end-of-the-year dollar slide. The United States has extended a \$6 billion line of credit to Mexico and there were market fears this had already begun to be drawn down, although the U.S. Treasury denied this.

In any event, the dollar fall has been in the thinness of markets, and analysts said that come the new year the mood would brighten again for the U.S. unit.

"I don't think it's indicative of how it's going to be for the rest of the year," said Dudley Rouse, a director at American Express Bank in London. "The dollar is still bid."

The Federal Reserve (Fed) is expected to tighten monetary policy by 0.50 or 0.75 percentage point at the next two-day meeting of the Federal Open Market Committee at the end of the January.

While this would widen the yield differential between the U.S. and Germany further, there will come a time when the Bundesbank decides to do an about-face on monetary policy following its gradual easing since the second half of 1992.

"A move by the Bundesbank to tighten policy, at a time when the Fed may be moving in the opposite direction, should bolster confidence in the mark," said Mark Cliffe, chief international economist at Midland Global Markets Research.

Also the mark will be one

of the few currencies with buying later next year as political and economic problems continue elsewhere, and its firm tone versus other European currencies will help it rise against the dollar.

"Looking at the other European currencies, the mark is really the only sensible choice," Kleinwort Montier said. He noted that political worries in France, Britain, Italy and Spain will take their toll and in Scandinavia debt problems will continue to drag on the Swedish and Norwegian crowns.

Analysts also noted that the market was currently ignoring the huge internal and external deficits in the United States but these could easily become a focus later in 1995.

The dollar's year-end comeback against the yen will

also extend into 1995 but gains are likely to be limited, analysts said. The U.S.-Japan trade dispute will linger as a major concern in the foreign exchange market but will not cause as much of a stir as it did this year, they added.

"The dollar could rise to around 105 yen and possibly to 105 at the first quarter of next year," said Masanori Yasuda, chief dealer at Bank of Tokyo. He said that although there were signs Japan's huge trade surplus was shrinking, it was too early to judge whether it would turn into a long-term trend.

The dollar was ending 1994 around 15500 marks and 99.50 yen, down around 11 per cent, but it had been lower. In October it touched a trough at around 14850 marks and 96.00 yen, around 14 per cent down on the year.

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1994

Big powers complete new trade body launch

GENEVA (R) — The United States, the European Union and Canada joined Friday in a symbolic ceremony clearing the way for the launch of Jan. 1 of the new World Trade Organization (WTO).

To champagne glasses, envoys of the three big trading powers, including officials of the 12 current EU countries, handed over documents confirming their ratification of the international treaty that sets up the WTO.

The formal act meant that all four members of the "quad" group that dominates the world trading scene were on board for the WTO launch. Japan delivered its ratification instruments on Tuesday, earlier than the

others for "technical reasons."

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Merrill Lynch maintains DM/USD1.55 and JPY/USD 92 forecasts

The following report, covering the period from Thursday, Dec. 22, 1994 until Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1994, was provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch — Dubai

Currency outlook

Overview

Fundamental View: In a Christmas-holiday shortened trading week, the dollar held on to the gains since the Nov. 8 Republican victory in mid-term U.S. elections, to trade around DM/USD 1.57 and JPY/USD 100 levels. As expected, the Fed declined to raise rates again at its Dec. 20 FOMC meeting and the focus now is on the next FOMC meeting on Jan. 31-Feb. 1. A 50 basis point hike in the Fed funds rate is expected at this meeting. A similar hike is expected at the March 31 meeting.

If that turns out to be the peaking of U.S. rates as our December forecast assumes, the dollar rally may not have much further to go. If U.S. growth remains strong enough to encourage the Fed to raise the funds rate to 7 per cent or higher, a stronger dollar may result. For now, we maintain our 12-month forecasts of DM/USD 1.55 and JPY/USD 92, which assumes that Germany and Japan will hike official interest rates in the second half of 1995.

Technical View: The U.S. dollar was generally strong against most of the world's major currencies during the week ended Dec. 23. As a result, the dollar index posted its eighth gain in nine weeks. Nonetheless, the index has only managed to challenge — but not penetrate — resistance in the 89.00-91.00 area. Moreover, both sentiment and momentum, can be described as being overbought, at least on a short term basis.

Thus, while medium term momentum is still constructive (indicating still higher rally in coming weeks) short term weakness, in the context of the still developing upturn, appears indicated. A break below 89.00 would be a good sign that a correction is under way. Although benchmark support remains at 84.91, most of the nearby support exists in the 86.80-87.95 range.

Japanese yen

Fundamental View: The dollar continued to trade steady around the JPY/USD 100 level. The dollar has benefited in recent weeks from a combination of dollar purchases, mainly by the Bank of Japan. We continue to expect the dollar to trade as low as JPY/USD 92 over the next twelve months.

Technical View: The Japanese yen gained 0.1 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Dec. 23. Sentiment is oversold. While the currency has only marginally penetrated the trading range that has been in force since July, it has decisively moved below the post-February upturn channel. Momentum is still weak, and appears to have the potential to have a downward bias into February.

If so, this would allow for an upcoming penetration of 100.80-101.80 Y/U.S.S support; such a move would set the stage for further weakness to 105-107. With the above in mind, resistance at 96-97 takes on added significance.

Deutschmark

Fundamental View: The dollar held steady against the Deutschmark trading around DM/USD 1.57. The Deutschmark has been strong on the European crosses, with the French franc and the Italian lira losing ground, due to political uncertainties in the two countries. It looks increasingly clear that the dollar has bottomed against the mark — *now* — the market has gained confidence in the Fed's inflation fighting credentials. For most of this year, markets have regarded the Fed as being "behind the curve" on inflation and consequently investors preferred to hold marks rather than dollars. Market participants now seem more inclined to believe that the Fed is serious in its turn toward a more restrictive monetary policy.

Due to this sea-change in sentiment, we recently revised our outlook for the dollar-mark exchange rate from being negative on the dollar versus the mark to having a neutral stance. An important wild card for the dollar is whether or not the massive amounts of capital outflows that.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: In a short and quiet trading week, the pound held steady around USD/GBP 1.54 and DM/GBP 2.42. Following the 50 basis point hike in the base lending rate by the Bank of England in the first week of December, the British pound staged a modest rally, rising to USD/GBP 1.57 and DM/GBP 2.46.

U.K. fundamentals continue to look good: Underlying inflation — retail price inflation less mortgage interest payments — is currently only 2 per cent. The lowest level in 27 years. However, real GDP rose 4.2 per cent in the third quarter following a 4.1 per cent increase for the second quarter and growth for 1994 should average 3.7 per cent. With very little spare capacity left in the U.K., inflation is likely to begin picking up soon and we expect base rates over the next year to be increased by another 100 basis points. However, we also expect that the U.S. will continue to tighten monetary policy while Germany is expected to shift to a less accommodative stance by the middle of next year. German official rates — the Lombard and discount rates — are expected to remain unchanged during the first half of 1995 before possibly edging higher in the second half.

As we expect the short-term interest rate differential between Germany and the U.K. to widen, we look for the pound to appreciate against the mark to DM/GBP 2.50 in 12-month's time and we expect the pound to follow the mark higher against the dollar to our 12-month forecast of USD/GBP 1.61.

Technical View: The British pound lost 0.9 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended Dec. 23, and was the weakest of the six major currencies we regularly discuss. Sentiment continues to improve and is near oversold levels. Momentum is weak and has the potential to remain so until February. Important nearby support exists down to 1.526 U.S./L, and a break below that level would allow for a test of the January low at 1.465. Resistance exists near \$1.58, then \$1.643.

Against the DM, sterling fell 0.5 per cent last week. Momentum appears to have expected to show a steady decline, and the federal deficit is decreasing. Diverging inflation rates in the coming year and concerns over

monetary policy are likely to lead the S.F./DM to 0.86 in 12-months time.

In line with our revised Deutschmark-dollar forecast that looks for further near-term dollar strength, we now expect the franc to weaken against the dollar in the next few months before recovering to trade near S.F./U.S.\$1.33.

Swiss franc

Technical View: The Swiss franc declined 0.2 per cent versus the greenback during the week ended Dec. 23. Sentiment is at its most oversold reading in over a year. Medium term momentum is weak, but the currency remains above its 1994 upturn line. The DM cross fell 0.2 per cent last week. Medium term momentum has maintained its upward bias, and is approaching overbought levels. The rally in the cross, therefore, may be approaching its final stages. Although benchmark support exists at 827, a decline decisively through 844 would damage the upturn. Resistance exists above 850.

Canadian dollar

Fundamental View: The Canadian dollar continued its slide against the U.S. dollar, dropping to C\$/U.S.\$1.40 level. Canada's economic fundamentals are sound, yet, they have failed to provide any respite to the C\$. Led primarily by exports, third-quarter real GDP growth registered an impressive 4.7 per cent rate following a robust 6.4 per cent rate for the second quarter. Canadian exports grew at a 20 per cent annualised rate in the third quarter. The strong export performance enabled the third quarter current account deficit to decrease to C\$1.1 billion from C\$7.5 billion in the earlier quarter.

As a share of GDP, this is the lowest level in over seven years. Personal consumption grew at a respectable 2.9 per cent. Unemployment was down in November from 10 per cent to 9.6 per cent. In September and October, the Bank of Canada followed an easy monetary policy with low short-term interest rates, given that the recovery in the consumer goods sector was more fragile than the recovery in the external sector.

The Bank of Canada limited upward pressure on short-term rates through maintaining a low overnight rate, below the U.S. Fed funds rate. With the U.S. now moving towards a restrictive monetary policy, interest rate differentials are moving in favour of the U.S., putting downward pressure again.

We expect that in the first year, rates will be increased by a total of 250 basis points, raising the cash rate to 10 per cent, and also causing the curve to invert by the second half of next year.

Inside near-term, positive news for the A\$ is likely to come through indications that economic growth in the December quarter is likely to be strong. Also, the government's fiscal package — released second or third week in January — is expected to project surpluses in 1996 and 1997. However, current account data for November is slated to be released on Jan. 4 and that is likely to be negative for the A\$. We expect the A\$ to be trading near U.S./A\$ 0.80 in six-month's time before falling back to U.S./A\$ 0.78 in 12-month's time.

MEES: Israeli capital to be used in Egyptian project

By a Jordan Times staff reporter

NICOSIA (AFP) — Israel's Merhav Group has joined in a nearly \$1.5 billion project to build a refinery near Alexandria, Egypt, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) reported in its latest edition.

The refinery is part of a multi-billion dollar programme designed to mobilise both public and private capital over the next five years to expand Egypt's oil refining and petrochemical facilities, according to the Cyprus-based review.

Merhav along with Swiss and Egyptian private firms represent 80 per cent of the Israel-registered Middle East Oil Refineries (MIDOR) venture to build a 100,000 barrel-per-day (b/d) refinery at Sidi Kerir, MEES said.

The remaining 20 per cent of the \$1.5 billion capitalised MIDOR belong to the state-owned Egyptian General Petroleum Company (EGPC), which will supply Egyptian crude to the refinery.

Merhav's head, Yossi Meiman, has said his group has already raised \$700 million for the project, out of which \$200 million will come from the United States, MEES reported.

Oil Minister Hamdi Al Banbi told MEES that Cairo has decided the five-year plan after "noticing that Europe and the East Mediterranean countries have not been building refining and petrochemical capacity for some time."

"We expect that there will be an opportunity to increase exports to the neighbouring regions in the coming years... we will also be needing more petroleum products in Egypt after year 2000," he added.

Batayneh heads investment arm of huge Palestinian holding firm

National Authority," Dr. Batayneh said. "After all, one of the company's prime objectives is to develop the Palestinian economy and hence we will be also be involved in infrastructure projects" in the West Bank and Gaza, he said.

The Palestine Investment and Development Company, a firm registered in Liberia, is the biggest Palestinian private sector venture and involves dozens of Palestinian businessmen based in Jordan, the Gulf states, Europe and the United States.

The establishment of the company was formally announced in mid-1994, shortly after Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir signed an agreement in May to implement to Sept. 13, 1993, declaration of principles on Palestinian autonomy.

While not all its founders need necessarily see eye-to-eye with the political programmes of Mr. Arafat, president of the PNA which runs autonomy in Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho, the philosophy that prompted them to come together and launch the huge venture was a realisation that the private sector had to take up the initiative to develop the Palestinian economy, according to some of the shareholders of the firm.

"We do not believe in leaving everything to the political regime, hoping that it would do the job for us," said one shareholder earlier this year. "The private sector has to take up its own initiative and see it through while of course cooperating with the political forces."

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.	For Your Stay in Amman Quality Furnished Flats CRYSTAL One and Two Bedrooms Reasonable Rates For Short or Long Stay 5th Circle 674503 - 674551	FOR RENT Deluxe Villas & Apartments in Amman SANABEL REAL ESTATE Tel. 864230 Fax. 864231	ALMASY Rent A Car Car Swiss tel: 827105 KURDI STORES Suwaifiah Tel. 827105
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Solo yachtswoman battles rough seas in crippled vessel Fears still held as Australian frigate steams to rescue

SYDNEY (R) — Rescue authorities said on Friday they may lose track of French yachtswoman Isabelle Autissier, adrift in huge sub-Antarctic seas, because her two emergency radio beacons will run out of power before she is due to be rescued Sunday.

Radio stations have been asked to broadcast a message to Autissier to turn off one of the beacons before they both run out of power, said Keith Hopper from the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

"We really fear we may lose her if both beacons run out of power," Hopper told Reuters. Each beacon has 48 hours of power.

Radio France, Australia

lian state-owned broadcasters and some commercial stations in southern Australia have agreed to air the message in French and English.

Autissier, 38, had been heading for Sydney in the second leg of the BOC round the world solo challenge when she activated the emergency beacons at 5:45 p.m. (0300 GMT) on Wednesday.

Autissier's normal radio communications have been severely damaged. A survival kit, including a raft and radio, was dropped to her from an Australian Air Force Hercules plane on Thursday, but Autissier has not made radio contact.

"We just don't know why

she hasn't used the radio," Hopper said. "Adding Autissier may have decided to try to get some sleep after battling the wild seas for the past 24 hours."

"We hope she will at least tune the radio into a commercial station and hear our message," he added.

The Hercules found Autissier's damaged yacht, the *Européen Pôtiou Charentes 2*, being pitched wildly in 50-knot winds and gigantic seas about 900 nautical miles south of Tasmania.

Brief grabbed radio message to the Hercules. Autissier said there was "something else wrong" besides the broken mast, said one of her shore crew who

was aboard the plane. Sergeant Vian said whatever else is wrong with her boat must be serious or else she would have erected a jury rig with the portion of the main mast still on deck.

"She would not have used the digital call she had lost control down there," Vian said. "I think it must be her steering. She may have lost her rudder."

Autissier was forced to erect a jury rig when she was damaged east in the Cape Town-to-Sydney leg of the race. That time she managed to make her way to the French Kerguelen Islands in the southern Indian Ocean and installed a makeshift mast.

Autissier dismissed earlier media reports that Autissier's boat had filled with water and沉没ed, saying the hull looked sound and the yacht normally surfaces in the water.

What has probably happened is that a big wave

was rolled her and broken the mast and destroyed all her electronics," he said.

Vian said Autissier was working on deck and saved to him when she saw him. She looked well, but mental fatigue would be danger now.

"She seems to be really tired. She is really tough and really intelligent, but mental fatigue will start," he said.

The only death in the

BOC race occurred in 1986-87 when French yachtswoman Jacqueline Deraux fell overboard in calm seas off the east Australian coast after battling huge southern ocean swells. Mental fatigue was blamed.

Conditions have eased slightly, but a new cold front is due to hit her Saturday. "Any front down there in the roaring forties is pretty rough," said Hopper.

Autissier first sailed around the world solo in the last BOC challenge in 1990-91 and earlier this year set the record for the flying cloud yacht race from New York to San Francisco around Cape Horn.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

China supercoach injured in car crash

BEIJING (R) — China's supercoach Ma Jun and his wife were hurt in a car crash in northeast Beijing. They drove back to his sports centre from his hospital room, a hospital official said Friday. "His life is not in danger," the official said by telephone from Number One Hospital in Wafangzhan City, Liaoning province. Ma declined to give further details. Ma's 10-year-old son, his father died on December 16, to his surprise, in a car accident in Dalian when his Mercedes-Benz struck a tree, the Beijing Evening News said. Ma suffered a broken head and had to have stitches, but his wife was not seriously hurt, the newspaper said.

PAOK beat Red Star in Belgrade tournament

BELGRADE (R) — Leading Greek club PAOK Salonika beat Red Star of Belgrade 2-1 (4-3) in the first match of a special tournament. The tournament marked the first international competition for a Yugoslav team since U.N. sanctions against Yugoslavia were relaxed almost three months ago. The two teams, including Petar Stojakovic who scored both goals, 19 points, are Yugoslavs. In the other two matches of the four-club event Limoges of France beat Belgrade 78-77 (43-34). Both teams are former European Champions. Partizan won the title in 1992 and 1993.

Sanders earns NFL defensive honours

NEW YORK (AFP) — Two-sport star Deion Sanders of the San Francisco 49ers has been voted National Football League defensive player of the year by sports writers nationwide. Sanders, who joined San Francisco as a free agent in September, after the players' strike postponed the Major League Baseball season, easily beat out Tom Jackson, Woodson and linebacker Greg Lloyd, both of Pittsburgh, in the balloting. "It's a wonderful achievement," Sanders said. "Not for myself, but I think for (defensive end) Bill Rhodes, because he has been responsible for a lot of things on my abilities, letting me play the way I'm playing. I'm being used. He put me in the right situations." Sanders had played all five of his previous NFL years with the Falcons in Atlanta, where he also does duty with the Braves baseball team.

Altnree hero Red Rum set for century

LONDON (R) — Triple Grand National winner Red Rum is on New Year's Day — equivalent to around 100 human terms. Red Rum won the Grand National in 1973, 1974 and 1977 and finished runner-up in 1975 and 1976. Racehorses rarely live to 30, but apart from one serious illness three years ago when he suffered a blocked artery, Red Rum has enjoyed good health. One day he got hit on the idea of sending a gift-boxed single red rose to the horse in it.

Goalkeeper scores with header

LISBON (R) — Belgian goalkeeper Guy Hubert saved the Portuguese soccer team Estrela de Amadora from a home defeat by Chaves Thursday night when he left his net to head in a late equalizer. Estrela de Amadora were 1-1 down in their first division game when Hubert moved upfield and headed home from a corner, giving his team a 1-1 draw. It was the first goal scored by a keeper in the Portuguese Championship this season.

Spurs skip Dumitrescu out to Sevilla

LONDON (AFP) — Tottenham's Romanian World Cup star Gheorghe Dumitrescu is on his way to Spain and will spend the rest of the season on loan to Sevilla after Spurs chairman Alan Sugar did an about-turn to sanction the deal. Spurs originally insisted on a straightforward sale wanting all their money back on the forward for whom former manager Osie Ardiles paid 2.6 million pounds less than six months ago. Sugar at first turned down the Spanish club's offer to take him on loan, but has now relented, given Sevilla the option to make the move permanent at the end of the campaign. Dumitrescu scored five goals in 12 games in Ardiles' flamboyant attacking regime, but was the first victim of new manager Gerry Francis's arms race. White Hart Lane and asked to go on the transfer list earlier this month.

Famed Yankees pitcher Allie Reynolds dies

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla (R) — Allie Reynolds, who pitched for six World Series championship teams with the New York Yankees has died. Reynolds, who had been undergoing treatment for cancer, was 79. Reynolds, a hard-throwing right-hander who was known as "Huge Chief" because of his American Indian ancestry and his blinding fastball, compiled a 182-107 record with a 3.4 earned run average in 13 Major League seasons. He started his career in 1942 with the Cleveland Indians and after his seasons joined the Yankees in 1947, where he pitched until retirement after the 1954 season.

Sharpe to miss playoffs with neck injury

GREEN BAY (AFP) — Green Bay's star receiver Stefan Sharpe will miss the playoffs with a neck injury, coach Mike Holmgren confirmed Friday. Sharpe will be seen by the Packers when they host Detroit in the first round of the National Football League playoffs Saturday. He caught 94 passes in the regular season for a total of 1,119 yards and 18 touchdowns. Packers doctor John McKenzie said the injury involved looseness in Sharpe's two vertebrae. He said it was too soon to know if Sharpe's career was threatened. Sharpe was injured on December 19 against Atlanta when he hit his head on an opponent's blocking. He experienced tingling in his limbs and face on the second half.

Tasmania wins Sydney-Hobart yacht race

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australian maxi yacht Tasmania won the night finish to the 630 nautical mile Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race Thursday, arriving in Hobart shortly before 2:30 a.m. (1850 GMT). Close behind her was fellow Australian maxi Bridabella, about half a nautical mile astern and racing to the line in the island state of Tasmania's capital at about eight knots. The 25.7 metre Tasmania, formerly the New Zealand Endeavour, which took line honours in the race to Hobart in 1992, led a record-sized starting fleet of 133 vessels for most of the 50th anniversary event. Sponsored by owner Robert Clifford of the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, she was first into the heavy ocean swell out of Sydney harbour after a crowded and chaotic start at 1 p.m. (0200 GMT) Monday. Tasmania had been on course to beat Kiadu's 1975 race record time of two days, 14 hours, 36 minutes and 56 seconds but she encountered adverse weather Wednesday that scuppered her chances.

Athens prepares Europe's largest basketball stadium

ATHENS (R) — A 20,000-seat Athens stadium, scheduled to host next June's European nations basketball championship for men, is far from ready and officials expressed concern Friday whether it would be completed on time.

"The stadium's seats, the electronic scoreboards, the wooden floor, and the warm-up courts are still to be completed," an official involved in the works told Reuters.

"There's a lot of work to be done, there have been delays and we must start immediately so that everything is ready on time," he said.

The court, next to the Athens Olympic Stadium, is nicknamed the Temple of Basketball and will be Europe's largest when finished.

It was originally scheduled to open last October

and Athens club Panathinaikos would have used it as its home court.

"We are losing big money waiting for the stadium to be completed," said Panathinaikos president Pavlos Yannakopoulos, who has spent \$22 million in the past three years to buy some of the most expensive players in Europe.

"Now we cramp our fans into a 3,000-seat stadium in both Greek and European matches and this is a pity since we could have sold an average 9,000 tickets a game if we had the space," he said.

Sports ministry officials said the stadium was now due to be completed by April and that they expected record profits from the two-week tournament with tickets going for an average \$40 each.



Juventus want Baggio but not at any cost

SESTRIERE, Italy (R) — Italian club Juventus said they wanted to keep World Cup star Roberto Baggio but were unwilling to break the bank to do so.

Baggio's contract with Juventus expires at the end of the season and speculation has been rife that the striker could join a foreign club willing to stump up in excess of \$30 million to buy the player and pay his contract for three years.

"We want to keep Baggio," Antonio Giurando, managing director of the Turin team, told ANSA News Agency in an interview from this Italian Alpine resort.

"We want to keep Baggio," Antonio Giurando, managing director of the Turin team, told ANSA News Agency in an interview from this Italian Alpine resort.

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Eintracht used four foreigners in UEFA tie

NAPLES (R) — Napoli have asked UEFA to examine the possibility that Eintracht Frankfurt used a fourth foreign player when the two teams met in a UEFA Cup match last month.

Eintracht was the third round 2-0 to aggregate. Giuseppe Iodice, secretary-general of the Italian club, said the German team's use of Santi Sibille Kovaljevic in its final leg on November 24 was Napoli's bone of contention.

He said Kovaljeovic violated the stadium's rules by "assimilated" — a foreigner who has played at least five years within a National Association, two of them at youth level — when he played for Yugoslavia's national team in the past few days.

Under UEFA rules, clubs are allowed three foreign players and two assimilated ones.

"Kovaljeovic lost his assimilated status once he played for Yugoslavia against Brazil and Argentina," Iodice said.

In October European soccer's governing body overruled the results of a UEFA Cup first leg match won 3-2 by CSKA Sofia against Juventus because the Bulgarian club had fielded a player who had not been registered with UEFA by the official deadline.

"There could be several solutions to this — repeat of the game, disqualification of the team — but, whatever the case, UEFA will have to clear this up," Iodice said.

NBA ROUNDUP

WASHINGTON (AFP) — National Basketball Association results and standings after Thursday's games.

Miami 126, L.A. Clippers 133
Atlanta 127, San Antonio 121, OT
Charlotte 125, Orlando 123
Houston 134, Golden State 124
Portland 104, Denver 93
L.A. Lakers 96, Seattle 95

Eastern Conference Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Orlando	21	6	.786	—
New York	14	12	.538	7
Atlanta	13	13	.490	11
Charlotte	17	17	.500	13 1/2
Portland	17	17	.500	13 1/2
Seattle	9	17	.364	12
L.A. Lakers	15	20	.429	13 1/2

Central Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Cleveland	19	8	.704	—
Indiana	16	9	.560	2
Charlotte	15	12	.556	4
Chicago	14	13	.519	5
Atlanta	12	16	.429	7 1/2
Detroit	9	16	.364	9
Milwaukee	9	17	.346	9 1/2

Western Conference Midwest Division

	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	19	8	.704	—
Houston	17	9	.604	1 1/2
San Antonio	14	10	.533	3 1/2
Denver	13	13	.500	

Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1994 11

China pull out of swimming World Cup

BEIJING (R) — China have decided against competing in next week's opening World Cup swimming event in Hong Kong but an official said Friday the decision was not related to doping scandal surrounding the team.

"We planned to take part but the athletes were too tired after the Asian Games just eight weeks ago," Yuan Jiwei, vice-president of the Chinese Swimming Federation, said.

Beijing itself has already been dropped as a venue to the World Cup series because the meet organisers in the Chinese capital failed to confirm they would go ahead with it.

Yuan said China's swimmers had had insufficient time to recover since October's Asian Games in Hiroshima, Japan, and participation in Hong Kong would have disrupted training schedules at the start of a busy year.

He said the decision not to compete had nothing to do with revelations of drug abuse at the Hiroshima Games. Seven swimmers were among 11 Chinese competitors banned after testing positive for the banned anabolic steroid dehydrotestosterone.

All 11 athletes were stripped of their Asian Games medals by the Olympic Committee of Asia.

The swimmers, who included women's world champions Yang Aihua and Lu Bin, were suspended for two years. China has vowed to take steps to curb doping which it maintains is an isolated problem and not officially sanctioned or organised, as alleged by some trainers and athletes abroad.

Chinese swimmers have taken part in the World Cup series in the past but Yuan said the event produced little benefit in return for the disruption to training.

"The only benefit is that they have some experience in how to compete," he said.

Yuan said another reason for missing the Hong Kong meeting was that entry formalities for travel there were extremely complicated.

In Hong Kong, one of the organisers said he doubted visa difficulty was a factor since special arrangements to pick up visas on entry into the territory could have been made.

"At present... it may be embarrassing for them to send swimmers," Romie Wong, a member of the Hong Kong organising committee, said.

"I think there are other problems hindering their coming, maybe finances."

The Hong Kong event next Tuesday and Wednesday is the first of seven in the World Cup series of short-course (25-metre pool) meetings. The six others will be held in European venues between January 31 and February 19.

Germany's Franziska Van Almsick, world 200 metres freestyle champion, leads an entry of 74 swimmers from 16 countries and territories in Hong Kong.

Van Almsick set a 200 metres freestyle world short-course record at the Beijing World Cup meet two years ago and Wong hopes she will break the mark in Hong Kong.



Bernard Tapie

Tapie to stand trial

LILLE, France (R) — The legal troubles of bankrupt French businessman and ex-soccer boss Bernard Tapie worsened when a judge ordered him to stand trial in March on charges he rigged a soccer match, judicial sources said.

Judge Bernard Beffie said Tapie, ex-president of Olympique Marseille, would stand trial in the north French city of Valenciennes from March 13 to 21 charged with active corruption, a stiffer charge than the original one of complicity.

Tapie, a former cabinet minister in a Socialist-led government who was declared bankrupt two weeks ago, is suspected of a role in bribing league opponents Valenciennes to lose a key match in May 1993.

He will also be tried for allegedly influencing witnesses in the match-rigging scandal. Each of the charges carries jail terms of between one and three years.

Tapie denies any wrongdoing, also rejected charges that he illegally ran up massive debts in running his crumbling business empire.

A few days after the disputed match, which Marseille won 1-0, the club reached the peak of its success under Tapie's eight-year leadership by winning the European Cup.

Two weeks ago, Tapie stepped down as president of the club after soccer authorities banned him.

Five others implicated in the case will also stand trial in March, including former Olympique manager Jean-Pierre Bernier who also has been accused of active corruption.

Valenciennois players Christophe Robert and Jorge Burnichaga Christo will be charged with receiving bribes and Marseille player Jean-Jacques Eydelie will be charged with complicity along with Robert's wife, Marie-Christine Robert.



Switzerland's Vreni Schneider on her way to her slalom win.

Slovenia's Hrovat ends Schneider's run

BEREGLI, France (R) — Slovenia's Urska Hrovat spoiled Vreni Schneider's run of success when she won the third slalom of the women's Alpine Skiing World Cup lead with a one-point advantage over compatriot Heidi Zeller.

The 20-year-old Hrovat, whose only previous World Cup success was on home snow in Maribor last season, had a near-perfect second run and won in a combined time of one minute 20.15 seconds.

Schneider, the World Cup holder, had to be content with second place 0.09 seconds behind. She also lost her unbeaten record in slaloms this season.

The 30-year-old Olympic champion would have taken the overall World Cup lead with a one-point advantage over compatriot Heidi Zeller if she had won.

"I never thought I could ski so well as I did today because of the rain," said Hrovat.

"I had problems at the start of the season because I had new skis but I'm improving with every race," she added.

The most gifted of the

young and impressive Slovenian team, she said it was a special pleasure to beat Schneider, who had won the last six slaloms she had entered.

"It gives me extra motivation because she is in such good shape at the moment. I hope there will be more victories like this one next year," she said.

France's Leila Picard, the sister of former super-giant Olympic champion Franck, shone on home snow, taking third place in 1:20.74, her best result in a slalom.

More of a giant-slalom specialist, she had only made it to the podium once before, in a giant in Cortina last year.

Australia's Anita Wachter, back in form after a lacklustre start to the season, was fourth on 1:20.78.

There were more bad news for Schneider as Germany's Katja Seizinger, the world's leading downhill specialist, showed she would also be able to score vital points in slaloms this season. She took eighth place in 1:22.19, her best result so far in a technical event.

Jordan Handball Championship
Ahli maintain lead; Orthodox drop to 2nd division

By Roufan Nahas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Titleholders Al Ahli ended their matches by crushing Amman 40/18 Thursday in the 11th week of the Kingdom's Handball Championship.

Al Ahli/Amman 40/18: Al Ahli crushed Amman at the Sport Palace in an exciting match that gave Al Ahli another two points to take the lead with 22 points in the overall standings.

Al Ahli experience and Amman's weak defence gave Al Ahli's Nabil Jamil, Iyad Abed Hamed and the wingers Mousa Abdallah and his brother Issa the chance to score and move freely, confusing Amman's defence who looked weak and unorganised to end the first half with 23/9 lead.

In the second half Al Ahli kept the pressure taking advantage of the unstable performance of Amman's players who tried to attack but in vain as the

match ended 40/18 for Al Ahli.

Al Salt/Yarmouk Shouneh 33/29: Meanwhile in another match Al Salt beat Yarmouk Shouneh in an exciting match from both sides.

Al Salt's Mohammad Hindawi and Imad Tadrous led the attacks successfully in spite of a lot of pressure from Y. Shouneh who looked determined to win.

The first half ended in a tie 15/15.

In the second half Al Salt concentrated on quick attacks to leave Y. Shouneh trailing as they won the match 33/29.

Hussein/Orthodox 37-31: In another match Al Hussein pushed Orthodox to the second division after losing 10 matches.

Al Hussein's strong defence was enough to leave Al Orthodox in a dilemma, as Al Hussein scored an important 37-31 victory to remain fourth.

Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts.
Alhi	12	11	—	1	420	276	22
Arabi	10	9	—	1	302	258	18
Salt	11	6	—	5	323	324	12
Hussein	11	4	1	6	299	314	9
Y. Shouneh	11	3	1	7	324	364	7
Amman	10	3	—	7	237	290	6
Orthodox	11	1	—	10	292	373	2

* Amman-Arabi have a postponed match.

Newcastle's Keegan hopes to slip back into top gear

LONDON (R) — Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan is looking to Andy Cole and Paul Kitson to get their act together and help recapture his side's old zest at Norwich Saturday.

The St. James' Park team started the season with six straight wins and 29 points from their first 11 matches of the English Premier League campaign.

But the last nine have brought just 10 points as Keegan's side, who have slipped out of Europe and the English League Cup, have dropped to fourth on the table.

Cole has failed to score in six games — his worst-ever spell for Newcastle — while Kitson has not featured on the score-sheet since November 19.

Keegan, once more without Peter Beardsley, has admitted the pairing has not worked as he had anticipated.

"Andy and Paul are trying to work out a new partnership. It hasn't lived up to my expectations so far but I feel they've got the ability to be a good pair," said the manager.

One player hoping to end his own goalless spell is expensive striker Chris Sutton, who has failed to net for four matches. Palace are without

"They're not sure where they're going to run or what the other is thinking, but it would surprise you if they did."

"It's wrong to throw two players together and say 'there you go, you cost around two million pounds each and you should be able to play together.'

"I think there's more to football than that but they're working hard and will get it right."

Keegan added: "If we can get three points at Norwich we'll be right back in it. We've got 21 games left after Saturday — we're not even halfway yet."

"But after Norwich we've got 12 games at home and nine away and I'd keep us in the back of your minds when you're talking about the championship."

Leaders Blackburn travel to Luton, seeking to extend Crystal Palace's miserable goalless run to eight league games.

One player hoping to end his own goalless spell is expensive striker Chris Sutton, who has failed to net for four matches. Palace are without

hamstring victim John Salako.

Paul Ince is again absent for champions Manchester United as they bid to make up for their midweek slip-up against Leicester at Southampton and maintain the pressure on Blackburn.

Liverpool, up to third after scoring six points out of six over Christmas, face a testing trip to Leeds.

The Elland Road side are still without Brian Deane, Howells' suspension would have been completed had Wednesday's game at Blackburn not been postponed.

The call-off, however, did give Gary Speed and David Weathers additional time to recover from the injuries they sustained against Newcastle.

Tottenham manager Gerry Francis faces an anxious wait to see if Nick Barmby and David Jones will be fit for the trip to Coventry.

Nottingham Forest need to add to West Ham's discomfort at Upton Park if they are to stay in the title race.

The Hammers should have John Moncur back, but Don Hutchison and Martin Allen are still injured.

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French pilot feared double hijacking

PARIS (Agencies) — A French pilot said on Friday he made an emergency take-off from Algiers airport at Christmas, fearing militants were planning to hijack his airliner along with an Air France jet just seized at the same airport.

The pilot for French domestic airline Air Inter told France-Info radio that the control tower had not warned him of the hijacking, even though he landed 30 minutes after the Air France Airbus A300 had been seized by hijackers.

The pilot, who did not give his name, said his plane, also an Airbus A300, landed on Saturday a half-hour behind schedule. Had he landed on time, he said, his plane could have been seized instead.

"If there were more of them, (the hijackers) could have split up and taken both planes," he added. "It could have ended up very badly."

The hijackers of the Air France jet shot dead three passengers before flying to Marseille where French commandos stormed the plane on Monday to end the 54-hour drama, killing all four guerrillas and freeing the 169 people on board.

As soon as the Air Inter plane came to a halt, Air France security staff boarded and told the pilot of the hostage-taking.

"The control tower never told us anything. If they had told us five or ten minutes earlier, I was just beginning my descent and I could have turned around immediately."

He said he disembarked his passengers and then took off immediately for the southern French city of Marseille, right across the Mediterranean, without refuelling or unloading the luggage on board.

Air Inter flight IT4210 left Marseille Saturday at 10:20 a.m. (0920 GMT) and landed in Algiers at 11:45 a.m. — 25 minutes behind its scheduled time of 11:20 a.m.

The hijacking of the Air France A-300 jet, with more than 200 passengers and crew on board, began at 11:18 a.m., according to Air France.

The revelations are bound to fuel doubts raised by French authorities about security at Algiers airport.

Earlier Air Inter confirmed

a report in the daily *Le Figaro* that the Air Inter plane took off without taking on new passengers or unloading the luggage of passengers who had just arrived.

But the airline did not know the exact reasons for the pilot's decision to make an emergency departure. "We are waiting for a security report," said a spokesman.

Le Figaro said Friday Algerian hardliners had planned to commandeer the Air Inter jetliner in addition to the Airbus-300 which they later hijacked to France.

Air Inter said the plane was only on the ground for 15 minutes. "The Air Inter plane was not threatened at any time," it said in a statement.

The airline said an Air France mechanic who had been about to board the hijacked jet learned of the danger and instead got on the Air Inter plane just before the doors closed.

The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most violent of Algerian fundamentalist groups, claimed responsibility for the hijacking.

France has been shocked by the ease with which the hijackers, loaded down with guns, grenades and sticks of dynamite, were able to walk on the plane under the nose of airport security just an hour's flying time from France.

Meanwhile, the crews of two French gas tankers bound for Algeria refused to dock on Thursday because they feared for their safety and turned their vessels back to France.

The communist-led CGT, the largest French labour union, said all freight shipments to Algeria should be suspended until Jan. 4 to allow better security measures to be set up.

Since the Christmas hijack, all French commercial airlines and ships have been banned from carrying passengers to Algeria.

Also on Thursday, investigators identified one of the hijackers as Makhlous Be Guetaf, 25, from El Arach in Algeria.

The three other bodies had yet to be formally identified.

(Continued on page 3)

Scalfaro will try to avert snap polls

ROME (Agencies) — President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro indicated on Friday he was opposed to calling the snap general election being demanded by outgoing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

In his first public acknowledgement of the seriousness of the political drama facing Italy, Mr. Scalfaro said he would need to hold a fresh round of talks with politicians to find a solution to the crisis sparked by Mr. Berlusconi's resignation last week.

Mr. Scalfaro said the first round of consultations provided "a clear and evident result: That a majority (in parliament) say 'no' to immediate elections."

He told reporters it was his duty to first seek a solution that could avoid new elections less than a year after Italians went to the polls.

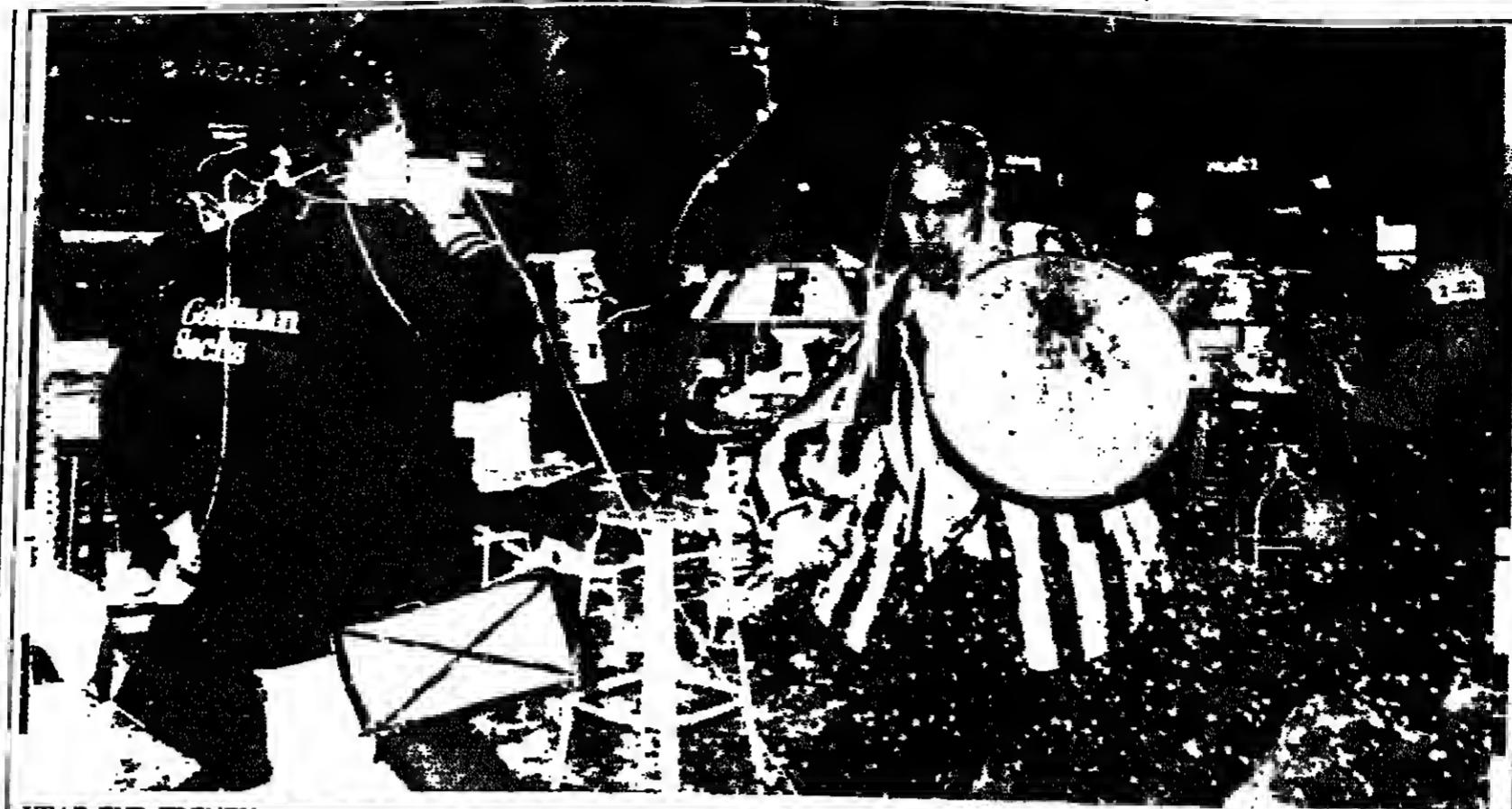
Mr. Scalfaro said he would have to hold a second round, which political sources said will start after the New Year holiday.

His comments put him at loggerheads with Mr. Berlusconi, who has insisted that snap elections are the only way to solve the crisis that broke after his former allies in the federalist Northern League left his stormy coalition.

This week's talks revealed deadlock between an alliance of the media tycoon and his loyal partners in the hard right National Alliance on one side and most other forces in parliament on the other.

Mr. Berlusconi's camp says that any government that does not include them or involves the opposition would betray electors who voted for the "freedom alliance" which won general elections last March. Berlusconi's Forza Italia party kept up its pressure

Scalfaro to appoint a tycoon as caretaker minister and said he spoke under the condition that the government is the "no" to elections," said Mr. Berlusconi's spokesman. "It would be mistaken



YEAR-END FRENZY: Traders on the options market at the Paris stock exchange celebrate on Friday the last trading day of the year, despite a 1% per cent overall market drop. (AP photo)

Settlers wreck Palestinian-owned gas station

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Jewish settlers said on

Friday they destroyed the foundation of a Palestinian-owned petrol station under construction in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, in an effort to bar Palestinians from building there.

David Alhazani, a settlement leader in the West Bank's Jordan rift region, said the site was under settler jurisdiction, and Arab construction would not be allowed there.

But the army said the con-

struction was legal.

"Some people decided to take action and yesterday late at night residents of the valley went out to the area along with heavy vehicles and wrecked the foundation of the gas station," Mr. Alhazani told *Haaretz*.

The action coincided with Arab landowners' attempts to keep settlers from expanding a Jewish settlement near Bethlehem, a project that has threatened to bar Israeli-Palestinian *�adima* (goodwill) peace talks.

The gas station has all the necessary permits for construction at the location," said Elie Sharar, civil administration spokeswoman for the West Bank.

It was the second conflict over construction between settlers and Palestinians in the West Bank this week.

Palestinians and Israeli peace activists demonstrated this week at a hilltop near Bethlehem, where construction has begun on hundreds of new housing units for Jewish settlers. The project was

approved by the previous hardline Likud government.

Yasser Arafat's Palestinian authority says the construction threatens Israel-PLO peace talks.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin has asked the attorney general to examine legal ways to stop the building, but while the examination is conducted construction continues.

Israeli peace activists vowed to rally at the site on Friday despite an army order outlawing demonstrations.

A Reuters camera crew on Friday filmed armed settlers directing a bulldozer that was uprooting the foundation. The settlers covered their faces to prevent identification.

The army's civil administration, in charge of the occupied West Bank, said the Palestinian owner of the petrol station site, Yunes Hanafi, had full approval to build the station on the plot near the Jewish settlement of Mehola.

But the army said the con-

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Meanwhile, the crews of two French gas tankers bound for Algeria refused to dock on Thursday because they feared for their safety and turned their vessels back to France.

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